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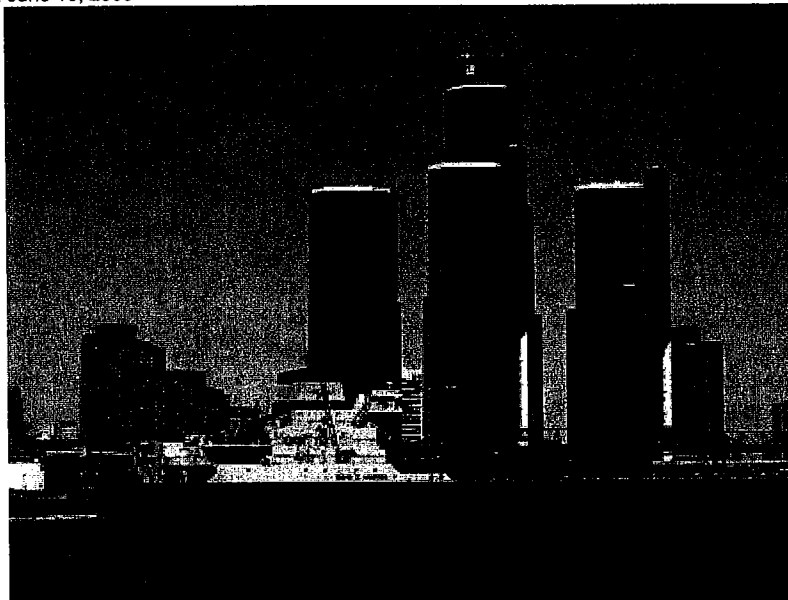
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Sunday, June 19, 2005



Chris Farina / The Detroit News

The former Detroit Marine Terminal is reopening this month under new management and with the new name of Port of Detroit.

Business mogul helps revive Detroit shipping port

Ambassador Bridge owner Matty Moroun pays off debt so cargo terminal can reopen.

By R.J. King / The Detroit News

The Detroit Marine Terminal, a once bustling port that handled hundreds of thousands of tons of cargo annually before a financial crisis shut it down a year ago, will reopen this month under new management and a new name.

Grosse Pointe millionaire Manuel J. "Matty" Moroun is part of the new leadership team at the terminal, which will be known as the Port of Detroit. The Ambassador Port Co. in Detroit, an affiliate of Moroun's Warren-based company, CenTra Inc., agreed to pay off \$3 million in bonds the previous owner defaulted on in exchange for becoming a managing partner. CenTra and its related companies own and operate hundreds of trucks as well as local rail lines.

"We plan to make the Port of Detroit a true intermodal facility where materials flow in and out and where we easily transfer cargo containers and products between ships, trucks and rail cars," said Dan Stamper, a director of Ambassador Port Co.

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Stamper, also president of Moroun's Detroit International Bridge Co., which owns and operates the Ambassador Bridge, said shipping by vessel is about 20 percent cheaper than rail, truck or air service.

"We see a lot of potential for the port," he said. "We feel it could help reduce truck traffic on public roads and the bridge."

The port's previous owner, Detroit Marine Terminals Inc., defaulted on the bonds as U.S. tariffs and booming demand in China drove up the price of steel, the terminal's main import, and companies cut back on shipping.

With the tariffs lifted earlier this year and China's economy cooling, Port of Detroit managers expect the 1800s-era facility to move shipments of coiled steel for the automotive and manufacturing industries, as well as auto parts, lumber, agricultural goods and consumer products.

Michigan is home to more than 40 commercial ports, and the Detroit River is responsible for moving about 80 million tons of cargo annually, according to Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority statistics. The shipping of foreign goods through Michigan waters pumps \$2 billion into the state's economy.

Plans to reopen the terminal took firm shape in May, when the city of Detroit, which owns the land, approved a deal with the nonprofit Port Authority, Ecorse-based Nicholson Terminal & Dock Co. and Moroun's Ambassador Port Co. The authority took ownership of the terminal, Nicholson agreed to provide cargo services, and Moroun would pay off the bonds.

The 35-acre Port of Detroit complex runs 2,150 feet along the Detroit River and can simultaneously handle three large vessels up to 1,000 feet in length.

In 1998, the cargo terminal handled about 800,000 tons of steel annually, but various factors squeezed those shipments to 80,000 tons by 2003, said John Stoker, chief financial officer of the Port Authority.

Stoker hopes the port can handle up to 500,000 tons of material for the current shipping season, which runs through December.

"That could double next year," Stoker said. "We have brought in some private companies to operate things and, because the port is now publicly owned, we can go after federal and state grants to help improve the facility."

It will be staffed with 50 full-time workers to start, with about 200 expected to be operating the terminal by summer's end. Operators declined to provide a revenue forecast, but they expect the facility to be profitable next year.

The federal government also sees potential in the Port of Detroit and other shipping destinations. John Jamian, acting director of the U.S. Maritime Administration in Washington, D.C., said he recently hired a senior economist to study the flow of freight between the United States, Canada and Mexico.

"We want to see where we can reduce traffic on our crowded highways and rail lines and transfer that to more environmentally sensitive waterborne shipments," said Jamian, past executive director of the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority and a former state lawmaker.

Jamian's department will look at shipments now flowing between Detroit, Port Huron, Toronto, Montreal and several Midwest cities that border major waterways.

"The Port of Detroit," he said, "should really help to drive down transportation costs for the entire Metro Detroit region."

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NEWSTRACK - BUSINESS



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Detroit bridge to Canada may get busier

DETROIT, Oct. 20 (UPI) -- The billionaire owner of the Ambassador Bridge linking Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, has big plans for the span.

Manuel Moroun is proposing a huge expansion of U.S. Customs inspection facilities, plus new retail stores and other development that could create up to 3,000 jobs and speed traffic between the United States and Canada, the Detroit Free Press reported Thursday.

To get the plan started, Ambassador Port Co. officials propose paying Detroit \$30 million to extend the lease on the tunnel and buy about 25 acres of land near the bridge.

"This is a big bet that Detroit's going to continue to be an international hub," said Dan Stamper, president of Ambassador Port and the Detroit International Bridge Co., which owns and operates the bridge. "Not everybody's rushing to Detroit to do things like this. This is good for the city, this is jobs."

He also said taking booths and inspections away from the bridge and tunnel entrances would cut crossing times, delaying the need for another bridge span or tunnel expansion 20 or 25 years.

Stamper said about 100 new customs booths would be built at the International Center, greatly boosting efficiency at the Detroit border crossing.

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Tuesday, June 20, 2006

Agreement with Canadian Transit Company to provide \$7 million for capital expansion

A \$2 million donation from the Canadian Transit Company to the stadium complex brings the partnership between the Ambassador Bridge and the University of Windsor to a whole new level, says Matthew Moroun, vice-president of the company and a member of the university's Board of Governors.~

"The bridge and the university have been neighbours for a long time, and now we are really partners for the future," Moroun said at a celebration Tuesday in the stadium. The Moroun family owns the Canadian Transit Company and through it, the Ambassador Bridge.

The donation matches the \$2 million lead pledge made by the University of Windsor Students' Alliance and the Organization of Part-time University Students.

"The Ambassador Bridge and the Moroun family have been incredibly generous in their support for the university," said University of Windsor President Ross Paul. "The stadium that they have helped to fund is a spectacular new asset to our students and community. It is a critical part of the Green Corridor project that is transforming our campus, Huron Church Road, and Canada's busiest gateway into appealing green space."

In addition to the donation, the company revised its financial agreement around the operation of its Duty-Free Shop, increasing its payment to the university for operating the facility from \$115,000 a year to \$250,000 annually for a term of 20 years, for a total of \$5 million. This additional funding will be used for capital expansion, including the stadium complex and other Board-approved projects.

"It's the ultimate win-win partnership," said Dr. Paul. "It's not just the money; it's jobs for students."

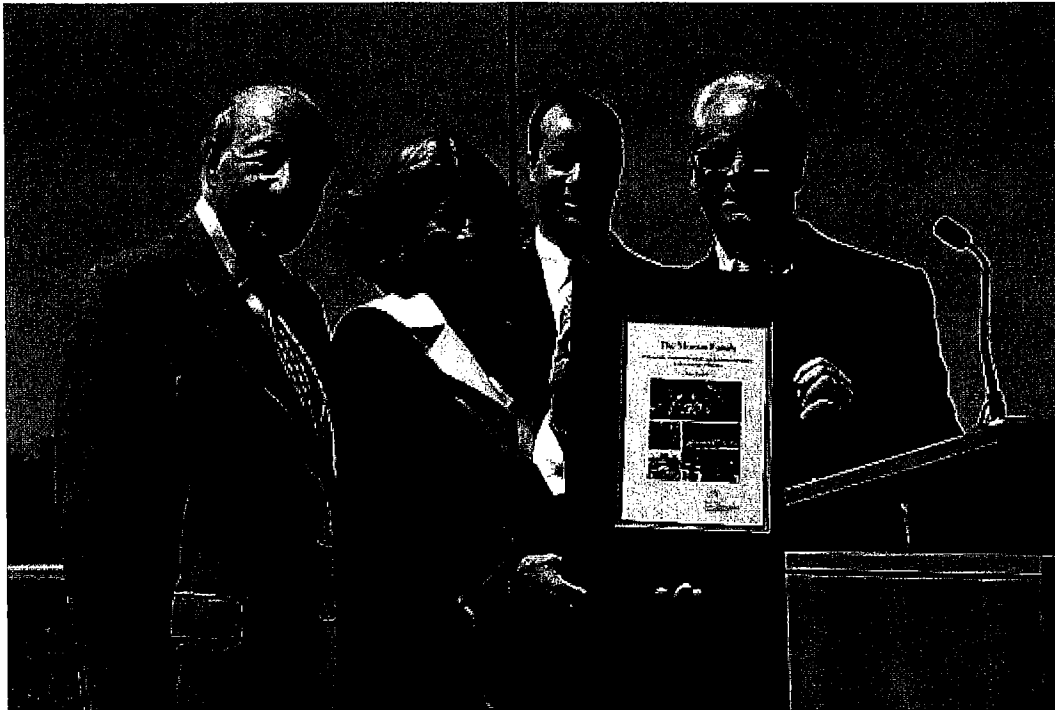
Since its inception 12 years ago, the agreement on the duty-free shop has generated employment opportunities for more than 1,000 University of Windsor students, who earned more than \$10 million in wages and benefits to help pay for their university experience.

Amanda Gellman, the university's vice president advancement, says the stadium serves as a landmark for visitors to Canada—the first thing they see as they enter the country from the bridge.

"Our plan is to continue to develop the profile of the stadium and surrounding area so it is top-of-mind for anyone who crosses at the Windsor-Detroit border," she says. "We are in a unique position to reach millions of international visitors a year and we want to help all stadium sponsors share in this opportunity."

Dan Stamper, president of the Canadian Transit Company, says the donation is a challenge to government and other corporate sponsors to mark the landmark gateway facility as a community project the area can be proud of.

"Because of its location at the corner of Huron Church Road and College Avenue, we see the stadium as a true landmark for our region—a source of real pride for all our citizens," Stamper said. "The Ambassador Bridge is happy to take the lead in this initiative and we're throwing down the gauntlet to others who wish to make a significant contribution to their community and its citizens."



University of Windsor president Ross Paul (right) presents a framed print of photos from last summer's Pan-American Junior Games to members of the Moroun family—from left: Manuel (Matty), Nora, and Matthew—in appreciation for their \$2 million donation to the university's stadium.

Today's Trucking

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Ambassador Execs to Ottawa: 'Put down your sword'

OTTAWA -- The president of the Ambassador Bridge and son of the bridge company's powerful owner traveled to Parliament Hill yesterday to voice concerns over a government proposal that attempts to take some control of international border crossings, including the private Ambassador Bridge.

Speaking at the House of Commons Committee Hearings, Canadian Transit Co. and Detroit International Bridge Co. President Dan Stamper said he has "concerns with the intent and the spirit of Bill C-3," -- which would allow the government to exercise a level of authority over international vehicular bridges and tunnels and five international railway tunnels linking Canada and the U.S.

Proposed amendments would provide the Canadian government authority to approve or veto the construction or alteration of international bridges and to "develop regulations pertaining to the governance, maintenance, safety, security and operation." The proposal would also permit the feds to rule on any sales or transfers affecting the ownership of international bridges and tunnels.

Stamper, who gave a historic account of how the private company has successfully operated the crossing and promoted efficient trade and tourism since it was acquired by Grosse Pointe trucking mogul Matty Moroun in 1979, suggested to the committee that the governance of the Ambassador was "put to bed" after a decade of litigation -- ending with the private company's right to operate the bridge as it chooses in exchange for new customs facilities solely at the bridge's expense.

"Having gone above and beyond the terms of our 1992 agreement, we are troubled and question the true intent of Bill C-3," Stamper said in his speech, which was obtained by Windsor issues activist Ed Arditti and posted to his website at <http://windsorcityon.blogspot.com>.

Stamper, who was flanked by Moroun's son Matthew, refuted past suggestions by some parliamentarians that the bill is needed in order to keep the Ambassador on a leash while the governments of Canada and Michigan construct a new bridge just a few kilometers southwest of the Ambassador.

Not only is a new bridge not needed since, as Stamper claims, bridge traffic capacity is only at 50 percent, but in no way is the bridge undermining the binational process of a new crossing as it announced it would go ahead and twin the current Ambassador with or without government support.

"It is the (binational selection committee) that began in 2001 and has been rushed in an effort to catch up with and replace the Ambassador Bridge's commitment for additional lanes," he said. "It is not my desire to be offensive but the truth does need to be told."

(Ambassador officials submitted to the committee their proposal for twinning the current span as a solution to Windsor-Detroit's border woes, but the plan was scrapped -- along with a proposal to convert an existing rail tunnel into a truck corridor -- in favor a separate new crossing downriver).

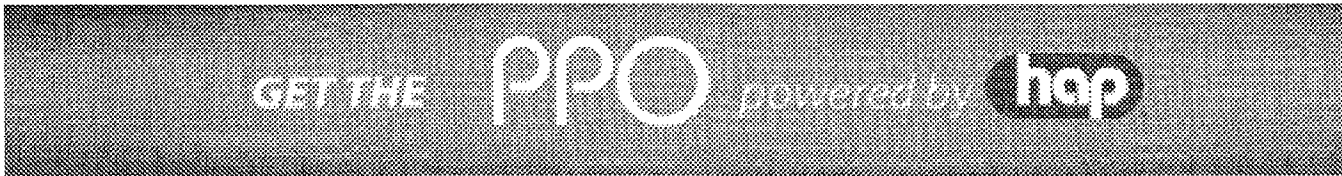
Specifically regarding Bill C-3, the proposal is much too invasive in injecting government into the regulation of bridges as it "unnecessarily puts the Governor-in-Council into a micro-management position by authorizing it to adopt regulations on the operation and use of each bridge," he says. "Simply stated, there is no problem with the status quo that would warrant this proposed new level of government involvement. Bill C-3 is a solution in search of a problem."

Adds Mathew Moroun: "There is no meritorious catalyst for additional and burdensome regulation of the Ambassador Bridge at this time. The state of the bridge is strong, its finances are sound, its management sharp and successful, and its track record the best in the industry," he said. "Additionally, there exists no national or international event, occurring recently or expected that would encourage or attract the invasive fettering of government."

Perhaps as a reminder of the bridge company's past legal victories on such matters, Stamper ended his speech with a slight reference to the courtroom: "We are not looking for another drawn out and disruptive legal mêlée. Lawsuits are not productive and are expensive while taking up time and effort that could be used more effectively in accomplishing something positive," he said. "We want to work with the Governments of Canada, Ontario and Windsor along with those in the United States, Michigan and Detroit to provide the most effective border crossing experience for business and consumers in North America."

Moroun also advised the government against a call to arms. "We are asking this committee and Transport Canada to please put down their sword," he said. "Set this legislation aside. Instead, engage in meaningful dialogue not just at a very formal hearing to discuss the legalese of this legislation."

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CRAIN'S DETROIT BUSINESS

Border tension

Bridge owner says new law gives Canada too much power

By Andrew Dietderich

6:00 am, February 12, 2007

A new law that the owner of the **Ambassador Bridge** calls "a loaded gun" gives the Canadian government more control over private bridges and tunnels and has the company that owns the bridge unsure if it will be able to retain its dominant position at the busy Detroit-Windsor border.
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Canada's Bill C-3, the International Bridges and Tunnels Act, passed Jan. 29. Canadian officials said the law aims to make the border safer. (See box, Page 23.)

Many specific guidelines and regulations of the law remain to be determined.

But Dan Stamper, president of the **Detroit International Bridge Co.**, said Bill C-3 effectively gives a potential competitor — the Canadian government — more control over the Ambassador Bridge, creating a conflict of interest.

"What we are worried about with Bill C-3 ... is that it gives the Minister of Transport the authority to say, 'Ambassador Bridge, we are going to put a ceiling on your business,' " Matthew Moroun, son of bridge owner Manuel Moroun, said testimony before a Canadian Senate committee, according to a transcript given to *Crain's* by the bridge company.

" "We are going to cap your growth and decide that we are not going to allow you to build a new span across the river your future is over. Instead, we are going to authorize a new span across the river less than a mile away that we control as Transport Canada, your brand-new competitor — nice to meet you.' "

Moroun also said the bridge company worries the law could allow Transport Canada — the Canadian equivalent of the **U.S. Department of Transportation** — to mandate commercial vehicles to use the new bridge and said that the government would be "the players on the field and the referee at the same time."

Of 24 bridges and tunnels connecting the countries at various points, two are privately owned. The cities of Windsor and Detroit jointly own the **Detroit-Windsor Tunnel**.

Also, the **Michigan Department of Transportation**, **U.S. Federal Highway Administration**, **Ontario Ministry of Transportation** and **Transport Canada** are studying where to build a span as part of the Detroit River International Crossing Project that could be a public-private partnership. A recommendation for a location is expected this year.

"We think all border crossings ought to have a lot of oversight," Stamper told *Crain's* Tuesday. "But the same bureaucrats who oversee us may be the same bureaucrats that compete with us, and that's our biggest issue with the law."

Until passage of Bill C-3, no clear authority existed to regulate matters concerning construction or alteration of border

crossing; approvals for changes in ownership, operation or control; and issues concerning maintenance, operations, safety and security.

"There's a lot more general interest in making sure all bridges and tunnels are safe and secure rather than protecting someone's personal profits," Brian Masse, a member of Canadian Parliament who represents Windsor West, told *Crai* Thursday. "This harmonizes all border crossings outright. It's about greater security, accountability and uniformity."

The act was introduced in Canada's House of Commons April 24. It moved through the House and Senate, passing on Dec. 13, and went into effect Feb. 1.

Stamper said he was unsure how the law would affect the Detroit International Bridge Co. since not all details are finalized. Some provisions won't go into effect until a decree is issued by the governor-in-council.

Still, Stamper told *Crain's* Friday that the company plans to begin construction by the end of the year on a new bridge that will parallel the Ambassador Bridge and be financed by bridge tolls and existing traffic volume.

About 25 percent of the goods traded between the U.S. and Canada travel via the bridge, Stamper said. It's been reported the bridge generates about \$60 million in revenue, a number he would neither deny nor confirm.

The Detroit International Bridge Co. said it has spent \$500 million already preparing for the new bridge, buying land and engineering the structure, among other things. The company has said it expects to spend another \$500 million completing the project.

Competitors of the bridge company said they have no problems with Bill C-3.

Marge Byington, director of government relations for the U.S. side of the **Detroit River Tunnel Partnership**, said his organization supports the law because of the improved security measures.

"If anything were to happen at the crossing, it would be a major disruption," Byington said. "Such a disruption would have a great impact on the U.S. and Canada, to say nothing of Michigan and Ontario."

The partnership is owned by the **Canadian Pacific Railway** and the **Borealis Transportation Infrastructure Trust**, the investment arm of the **Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System**.

The group hopes to build a new \$600 million rail tunnel parallel to its existing tunnel to handle more cargo and convert the existing tunnel for use by trucks. About 25 trains go through the tunnel daily, or more than 460,000 rail cars a year, Byington said.

Neil Belitsky, executive vice president and general manager of the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel, said the cities of Windsor and Detroit support the additional security measures.

Canada asserts power

The Canadian government passed a law called the International Bridges and Tunnels Act, also known as Bill C-3, on Jan. 29.

It would give the minister of transport, infrastructure and communities the power to:

- Order the inspection of the structure of an international bridge or tunnel or the disclosure of its safety inspection reports to the federal government.
- Order a threat and vulnerability assessment of a bridge or tunnel to identify security gaps, or order that these gaps be addressed and reassessed on a regular basis.
- Regulate operational issues such as how the bridge is to be used or what type of vehicles will be permitted.
- Set tolls, in consultation with the owners/operators, if a bridge or tunnel raises its tolls and traffic is negatively impacted.

In addition, the Canadian federal government would need to approve changes in owners or operators and any new crossings or alterations to existing crossings.

So what about the U.S.?

The **U.S. Department of State** plans to publish a notice in the Federal Register within weeks that will require a presidential permit for "all new crossings of the international border as well as to all substantial modifications of existing crossings," according to a written statement provided to *Crain's* by Neal Belitsky, executive vice president and general manager of the **Detroit Windsor Tunnel**.

It also could require spans that haven't received a presidential permit — such as the Ambassador — to apply for one.

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March 31, 2007

Who will build Ambassador twin?

Bridge owners are step closer to erecting second Detroit span while Mich. proceeds with plans, too.

Andy Henion / The Detroit News

The race to build another bridge from Detroit to Windsor -- North America's busiest commercial crossing -- is heating up.

The private owners of the 78-year-old Ambassador Bridge have received Michigan's environmental blessing, snapped up \$400 million in land and say they're ready to erect a twin span over the Detroit River as soon as U.S. and Canadian officials sign off.

A public crossing, meanwhile, has progressed from pipe dream to action, as Michigan Department of Transportation officials test the ground strength in southwest Detroit for bridge supports and discuss potential relocation plans with area businesses. Canadian officials are working in lockstep.

The scramble makes some wonder whether two bridges would be built.

"It's absurd to have these projects going on at the same time," said Alison Benjamin of the Gateway Communities Development Collaborative, which is challenging the Ambassador's environmental permit for a second span. "We at least need a moratorium on one of them."

While that's not likely to happen, the state's leader of the public project, MDOT's Mohammed Alghurabi, said only one span will be successful. The private plan is further along in the process.

"We've been clear that the intent is not to have two bridges," Alghurabi said. "If the Detroit International Bridge Co. were to succeed (in getting cleared for construction), then the (public project) will not continue."

Officials: 2nd bridge needed

The Ambassador handles a quarter of all trade between the two nations -- \$145 billion a year -- and government officials say another bridge is needed to relieve congestion and provide a backup in case of security or maintenance problems.

MDOT has spent more than five years and about \$10 million of a \$30 million budget to study a public bridge, which would cost the United States about \$1 billion, Alghurabi said.

Critics say the public project is a waste of money, given Grosse Pointe billionaire Manuel "Matty" Moroun's initiative, and would unnecessarily displace at least 50 businesses and 135 homes in Detroit's Delray community and an unknown number in Windsor.

Dan Stamper, president of the bridge company, which is owned by Moroun, said his firm has bought all the land it needs and wouldn't displace anyone else on either side of the border.

Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, who supports the private project, says a public bridge is "unnecessary and unneeded."

"The expectation that we sacrifice another neighborhood (and) duplicate the financial investment is unacceptable and creates bad public policy," Kilpatrick wrote in a Jan. 17 letter to Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

Stamper said Ambassador traffic volumes do not support the case for a new bridge. Total passenger-vehicle and truck crossings have plummeted 24 percent since 1999 and, with the auto industry struggling, show no signs of picking up, he said.

The company wants a new bridge because the aging Ambassador is becoming too expensive to repair, Stamper said. Building a six-lane span next to the existing four-lane bridge would cost about \$500 million on top of the land-acquisition costs. The Ambassador would remain standing and be refurbished and reopened if needed, company officials said.

Stamper has worked for 15 years on the plan and called the government's effort "a \$30 million campaign against us."

"How hard should it be for a private company to invest \$1 billion in the state of Michigan?" he said, adding that the project would create 3,700 construction jobs.

Canada on public bridge side

Can Moroun get a fair shake from the public agencies competing against him?

MDOT will say whether he's approved for \$1 billion in tax-exempt government bonds to finance the bridge. Stamper calls that a conflict of interest; MDOT officials say they can be objective.

Mark Butler, spokesman for Transport Canada, which must approve Moroun's primary Canadian permit, said that government is committed to a public crossing. Nonetheless, Butler said his agency won't discriminate against Moroun's permit when it considers issues such as noise and air quality. A decision could come by year's end.

"There's no conflict and certainly no prejudice," Butler said.

In the United States, the Coast Guard decides on major bridge permits. Robert Bloom, commander of the guard's Cleveland office, said the Ambassador twin already meets the waterway requirement because it would span the river. A ruling is expected this summer.

"There is no discretion," Bloom said. "It's either in accordance with regulation and law or it's not."

Meantime, the Gateway group's March 16 challenge to Moroun's permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality claims the state agency didn't address concerns about noise, traffic and air quality on the proposed twin span. A state administrative judge is expected to hear the protest.

State Rep. Steve Tobocman, D-Detroit, who supports a public bridge, plans to soon introduce legislation that would give a public authority stocked with state officials the power to regulate tolls on the Ambassador and any future private crossings.

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